





THE ART
OF
MINIATURE PAINTING,

COMPRISING

INSTRUCTIONS NECESSARY FOR THE ACQUIREMENT OF THAT ART.

BY
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THIRD EDITION.



Ars probat artificem.

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P R E F A C E.



IN preparing the following pages for the Press, to form one of a very important series of Works on the promotion of Art, I have been mainly influenced by a desire to be as simple as possible in the rules and directions I give, and to state my reasons for these rules. If the causes of failure, in the instructions given in the different branches of Art, were duly investigated, it would probably be ascertained that in many cases this failure has arisen from its being taken for granted, that the pupil is in possession of a certain amount of previous knowledge of the subject. I have made, in the present instance, no such supposition; my object being to treat of the materials, the processes, and the principles in this branch of Art, in such a manner as if the learner knew

nothing of any of them. I cannot but hope that this will be found to be the wisest course; that, by thus carefully, though briefly, explaining of every process, in consecutive order and dependence, I shall be found to have brought the subject thoroughly home to the understanding of the learner.

LONDON, JULY, 1852.

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A TREATISE
ON
MINIATURE PAINTING.

THERE are three kinds of materials on which miniatures are painted, namely: ivory, paper, and vellum; but as the first two are the most usual in England, I shall confine my remarks to them.

Painting on parchment or vellum is practised in France, and on the continent generally; but parchment being a material inferior to ivory and Bristol board, its use has become obsolete in England.

IVORY.

The first thing necessary to be attended to, is the choice of ivory. Of this there are two sorts,—hard ivory, which is generally prepared; and soft or absorbing ivory, which,

besides being more difficult to wash colour upon, requires much greater labour in working. Ivory, which is grained all over, must be rejected, and those pieces alone chosen which have a clear space in the centre, broad enough for the face to be painted on it; for the hair, the dress, and the back ground will be so inevitably charged with colour, as to render the striated vertical grain in the other parts unobservable.

Ivory properly prepared for use may now be procured at all the artists' colour shops; so that it is scarcely worth the time and trouble of painters to prepare it for themselves; as, however, in the country or abroad, there might be a difficulty in procuring these ivories, I will describe the best method of rendering it fit for use; premising that when the leaves come from the ivory-cutter, they are smooth and shining, and more or less full of scratches from the saws used in cutting them; and hence, in that state, they are bad for working on, and incapable of receiving colour. The object, in their preparation, is to erase these scratches, and to produce a "tooth" or surface to which the colour may adhere.



TO PREPARE IVORY.

For this purpose, a flat, nicely-smoothed, square piece of wood—(an inch or more in thickness, to prevent its warping)—a basin of clean water, and a sponge thoroughly free from grease, are required. Dip your ivory in the water, so

that both sides may be wet; then, laying it on the board, sift on it some prepared pumice-stone, and with a glass "muller," the bottom of which is wet, rub over the ivory, not up and down or across, but with a circular motion; continuing this for a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, or, in fact, until the scratches have disappeared; by which time also the surface will have lost its polish, and will have gained a tooth, *i. e.* a roughness which will permit the colour to adhere. During this process the pumice must be kept moist by the pressure of water from the sponge, but not too wet; whilst occasionally the ivory must be washed clean, with a large camel hair pencil, to ascertain whether the scratches have disappeared and every shiny spot has been removed. This effected, the ivory must be most carefully washed in several clean waters with a large camel-hair pencil, and then laid in the sun to dry and to bleach; or, in default of sun, at such a distance from the fire, that it may dry gradually and not split from warping.

As pumice in powder, in the state in which it is usually procured, is full of gritty particles that would add to the scratches on the ivory, instead of helping to remove them; it must therefore be placed in a small bag of fine muslin, and through that be "pounded" over the ivory, in the state of an impalpable powder; a state easily ascertained by the finger.

Should ivory get yellow by time, or by being kept shut up in the dark, wet it on both sides, and put it to dry in the sun; this will effectually bleach it.

BRUSHES.

It is indispensable that sable brushes should be used for miniature painting. Pencils of camel's hair are worthless for that purpose, from their want of elasticity. Red sables are sometimes preferred, from their greater stiffness, and black sables for their having better points. The small sable pencil used for stippling should not be too small; since, if it be too small, it leads to an excess of finish, or rather stippling, which distracts the attention from the higher objects of art, namely, depth, solidity, and colour.



PREPARED OX-GALL, &c.

This preparation is not necessary for ivory, but is sometimes indispensable for greasy paper; the less however it is used, the better. If you have any doubt about the paper or Bristol board being free from grease, wash it all over with clean water and a camel's hair pencil.

A glass muller, a ground-glass slab, and a small palette knife, for grinding and mixing colours in powder, will be required; a bottle, also, of gum arabic water, not too thin, as it is at any time easily diluted. A tracing point will be necessary; not too sharp, or it will indent the ivory as well as make a line so fine as to be barely visible. A scraper is also necessary. This instrument is sold at the colour shops. Some painters use a lancet, others a needle.

COLOURS USED IN MINIATURE PAINTING.

Carminc.—This well-known, brilliant crimson possesses great power in its full touches, and much clearness in its pale washes, although not equalling the pink or rose madder in this latter quality. Carminc flows and works extremely well. For flesh tints the carminc prepared in cakes is best, but for draperies I prefer to use the powder. In this state it is to be rubbed up on a slab with water diluted with a very little weak ammonia.

Pink Madder.—This very delicate carnation is much used on account of its superior permanency. It is clearer in its pale tints than either crimson, lake, or carminc, but does not possess intensity.

Rose Madder is similar to the above, but possessing a little more depth.

Crimson Lake is similar in its character to carminc, but wanting the extreme richness and brilliancy of the latter. It is useful for mixing various tints in draperies.

Venetian Red.—A permanent and beautiful colour. Its tints, though not bright, are clear, and it mixes and works kindly with cobalt or French blue, affording fine pearly greys. I prefer it to light red, as being not only of a better tint, but working better.

Light Red.—A clear and transparent, low-toned red, similar in character to Venetian red, with somewhat more of an orange tint.

Indian Red is of a purpleish red colour. It makes an excellent shadow colour for flesh, both alone and mixed with blue.

Vermilion.—A heavy colour, not to be used very freely in flesh tints. A want of transparency, and its not flowing well, preclude its being used so generally as would be desirable.

Scarlet Vermilion is a little more scarlet in tint than the above, and washes better.

Orange Vermilion is rather more transparent than the others, with a clear but not bright orange tint; it washes moderately well, and by some miniature painters is much esteemed.

Chrome Yellow is an opaque, or body colour. It is highly necessary for touches, or for heightening to gold, &c. There are three tints of chrome yellow—pale, deep, and orange; but in miniature painting the lightest tint will be found sufficiently deep.

Indian Yellow.—A very fine intense yellow. It is permanent, and works extremely well. It is used in flesh tints mixed more or less with Venetian red, being also a serviceable colour for draperies, skies, &c.

Roman Ochre is used both for dark flesh colour and for draperies: it is for these purposes preferable to yellow ochre.

Gamboge.—A pale and somewhat green yellow, occasionally used in draperies.

Cadmium Yellow.—A splendid powerful orange yellow. It is extremely brilliant, and nearly transparent, and is the best vehicle for obtaining an orange tone.

Ultramarine.—Permanent, but not working well, except in large masses in draperies. It is most pure in tint, and at the same time one of the most permanent pigments known. It is not so well calculated for mixed tints as many other blues, on account of its gritty quality.

Ultramarine Ash is not so positive in tint as ultramarines, but washes much better; it is occasionally used in flesh.

Cobalt.—A very useful colour in every respect, sufficiently bright, permanent, and washing well. Cobalt blue, pink madder, and raw sienna are sometimes used as a flesh tint.

French Blue.—Darker than cobalt and of great depth; it is permanent, resembles the tint of real ultramarine, and, although not so pure and vivid, is more generally useful, as it washes and works well.

Indigo.—A useful colour for dark blue compound tints.

Prussian Blue.—Used in miniature draperies; useful also to represent blue velvets; and when it is mixed with carmine, all the varieties of purple, violet, and morone velvets may be obtained by it.

Burnt Sienna.—A rich transparent brown orange, useful in warm complexions.

Mars Orange.—A very clear and beautiful orange, of the burnt sienna character, but without the tendency to brown which distinguishes the latter; it is, consequently, valuable in its pale wash for bright sunny tints, and in flesh painting is unequalled for clearness of tone.

Burnt Umber.—A very useful colour for hair and draperies.

Sepia.—A valuable cool brown pigment. Its pale washes are extremely clear. Mixed with other colours, it affords a series of valuable tints.

Madder Brown.—A rich lakey russet brown, affording equally the richest description of shadows and the most delicate pale tints. It forms a soft shadow colour with blue; alone it may be used to lower red curtains or draperies, and for the darkest touches in flesh.

Neutral Tint.—A very useful colour as a vehicle for many other compound tints.

Purple Madder.—An intensely deep, rich, and warm purple, affording the greatest depth of shadow, without coldness of tint.

Constant White.—Adapted for the highest lights where white is used, such as the touches of the eye, tip of the nose, &c. It has not much body, working but indifferently.

Chinese White.—This is a very eligible material; it has a fine body, works well, and is quite permanent. In these properties it excels every other white pigment which has been hitherto tried as a water colour.

Lamp Black.—An opaque black, excellent for mixing with Chinese white as a body colour; it is the ground for a black coat. It has a very strong body that covers every underlay of colour readily.

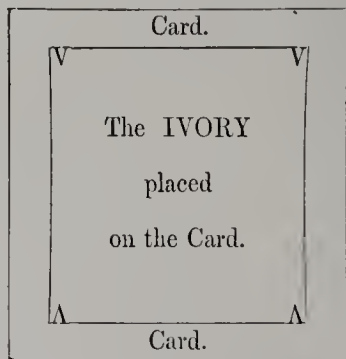
Ivory Black is the richest and most transparent black, and has a slight tendency to brown in its pale washes.

MINIATURE PAINTING.

As ivory is semi-transparent, it is indispensable to put some opaque white substance behind it. Some artists gum the upper edge to a piece of Bristol board, but this is a bad plan, because if the Bristol board warp, (and it is very liable to do so), it will, from its thickness, cause the ivory to warp also, even to splitting, or at least causing much annoyance. I have found the best plan to be, to gum the upper edge of the ivory to three or four thicknesses of writing-paper, (themselves gummed to each other by the upper edge), taking care to leave the paper a quarter of an inch higher than the ivory, merely for the purpose of pinning it to the desk, or book, or whatever you choose to place it on for painting; thus arranged, the writing-paper will not warp the ivory, being more pliant than the stiffer Bristol boards. A gentleman once complained to me, that a miniature I had painted for him "had all turned blue," and, on seeing it, I instantly discovered that the paper,—which had been placed behind it, and which had been

carefully gummed, as will be hereafter explained,—had been removed by him, when of course the dark-coloured table on which it was placed appeared through. The defect was soon remedied by placing the ivory again on white paper, not without hazard however of injuring the miniature by the necessity of gumming it on when finished.

As the size of ivory is very limited, few painters can judge so correctly of the size and proper position of the head they are about to paint on it, as to begin at once with the brush. A black-lead outline on ivory must be strictly avoided. Various modes of attaining this first form are practised by various painters ; such as putting an outline beneath the ivory, and painting on it with this “palpable obscure” as a guide. If you prefer to adopt this method, cut a card about an inch larger each way than your ivory, which you fix in a temporary manner thus :—



Lay the ivory evenly on the card ; make a pencil mark on the card at each end of the ivory ; and then cut four teeth, or angular points, in the form of a V, at the corners

near the ends of these pencil-marks, quite through the eard, as shown in the diagram: slide the ivory under these four points of the eard, and this will hold it securely. The drawing being made on a piece of paper somewhat smaller than the size of the ivory, you have the advantage of being enabled to move the drawing to any part of the ivory you may desire.

The surest way, however, is to make a clear, careful outline (leaving out all shading) on a piece of rather thin and glazed writing-paper. Rub the back of this paper with Venetian red in powder, then arrange it as your taste may point out on the back of the ivory, and while it is kept steady in its place by a small weight, carefully trace the outline of the drawing with an engraver's etching needle having a blunted point, or with a "tracing point" made for the purpose, occasionally lifting up the paper (without however altering its position) in order to see that the lines you have made do appear distinctly; you will then have a clear red outline on your ivory—a colour that will not interfere with the corrected outline presently to be made.

Be careful that your "tracer" be not too sharp at the point, or it may indent the ivory. Should the powdered Venetian red be too faint to give a trace as desired, you can mix a small portion of ivory-black with it, in order to make it mark more distinctly; but beware of using ivory-black alone, or you will subsequently have great trouble to get rid of the dingy marks.

The outline having been made on paper, and its back being reddened, as explained above, the next thing will be

FIGURE 1.



to determine its proper position on the ivory. The taller the person represented, the nearer to the top should the head be placed; on the contrary, the shorter the person,

FIGURE II.

the lower down on the ivory, this being the only way we have of giving an approximate notion of the real height of the figure.

FIGURE III.



Generally speaking, if the head be not placed equally distant from the two sides of the picture, it should be

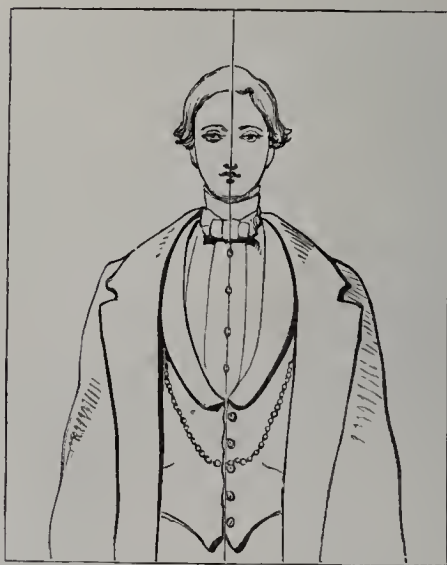
FIGURE IV.



allowed a little more space in front of the face than otherwise, as in Fig. III. Placed as in Fig. IV., it would look very awkward.

It also produces an ungraceful effect, to draw both the head and the body exactly in the same view, (as in Fig. v. ;)

FIGURE V.



therefore turn the figure slightly away from the face, so as to give a marked, though not great variation; not however too great, lest it look strained, or have what may be called too much motion, a great mistake in all mere portraits, especially those on so small a scale as miniatures. The only sure way to accomplish this, is to paint merely the

face first, and afterwards to adapt the figure to it in whatever way may seem most graceful. The frontispiece affords a

FIGURE VI.



very beautiful illustration of Sir T. Laurenees' skill in giving a graceful and varied outline to his portraits. Portraits, though faithful as to the likeness, often suggest the idea of a larger person than the original really is. In some respects, this is unavoidable in a picture, from its very limited size:—limited, that is, as compared with a lady in

FIGURE VII.

a lofty room or under the vast expanse of the sky. This is an inconvenience inseparable from art, and must be

allowed for accordingly. Were we to attempt to proportion even a little girl of seven years of age to the size of a piece of ivory four inches square, it would give some such preposterous appearance as is here represented. (*See Fig. VII.*)

Your outline having been thus fairly transferred in red to the ivory, by means of the chalked paper, the next process will be to draw each feature with the brush as correctly as you can, not relying on the red outline beyond its being an approximate guide; for, trace it as carefully as you will, the tracing point will more or less falsify the drawing; so that every line and every distance must be carefully revised, as on this preliminary caution your ultimate success will chiefly depend.

Keep in mind distinctly the following axioms of "the beautiful":

A short upper lip indicates high breeding.

The ears should be small.

Falling shoulders are graceful.

A *nez retroussé* indicates pertness, and, if occurring in nature, must not be exaggerated in the picture.

A Roman nose is too marked in a woman, and must be treated in the picture with a view rather to repress than to amplify it.

A long neck is graceful; not so a short neck and square shoulders.

A small head is more elegant than a large one; yet do not forget that one too small gives the appearance of the head of an idiot.

COLOURING.

Almost every painter sees nature with a different eye, and uses different colours to imitate it, some more successfully than others ; the colours, however, to be shortly mentioned below, will produce every effect that may be required. We will begin with the local flesh colour, which must be washed in delicate tints over all the flesh, before the shadows and the half-tints, (or “demi-tints,”) are put in.

The nearest approach to the general colour of “flesh” is Venetian red, having a little Indian yellow mixed with it. The colour of the face is usually divided into three “tones,” or gradations ; the forehead is also a little more yellow than the cheeks or chin. These, however, are to be looked upon as general principles, as almost every face has some peculiarity of colour in it, which it is the business of the artist to observe and to imitate.



DARK COMPLEXIONS.

For these, the local colour will still be Venetian red ; with Roman ochre, however, instead of Indian yellow, as mentioned above.



SHADOWS.

Having got your local colour as dark as you think your picture will justify, proceed next to wash in the principal shadows. These are the masses above the eyes, the shadowed side of the nose and face, the shadow under the lower lip, and those of the jaw.

SHADOW COLOUR.

Properly speaking, there can be no one mixture for shadow-tints, inasmuch as each shadow in a face not only varies from the others, but those in one face will differ from those of another: I give therefore a general mixture to be kept as a foundation, which can be made a little more purple, a little more yellow, or a little more grey, as occasion may require. It will be noticed that the colours chosen are permanent, as far as colours can be so.

Venetian red, cobalt, pink madder, and Indian yellow are to be mixed together to a slightly purplish tone; and it will be a great convenience if enough of this be prepared to last for a month.

DEMI TINTS, OR HALF TINTS.

In observing the colour of the human face, the uneducated eye sees nothing more than the general or local colour, making no nice distinctions between shadows, "demi-tints," "pearl," or "grey tints;" yet such gradations and varieties do exist; and very much of what is called "flesh-colour" is composed of purples and greys. Such, however, should never be so violent or decided, as to impress the spectator with the notion of a prevalence of blue and purple, and sometimes even of green. The delicate shadows of the forehead are more grey than those of the lower face; the half shadows under the eyes are more inclined to purple; but whenever the deep shadows blend into the local flesh colour, there will also be found a lilac or a grey, according as the complexion is light or dark. With many artists the lilac or pearly tint is in great request, especially where the complexion is delicate and the skin transparent, as in children. Greys are found by adding cobalt to the shadow colour; pearly tint, by a mixture of cobalt and pink madder, modified, when used, by "shadow colour." It is a fine study for beginners to contemplate the head in the National Gallery, called the "Gervartius" of Vandyke, for the charm of its "pearly tint." The green, seen in the works of some modern miniature painters, arises merely from their having copied oil pictures by the old masters, without reference to the fact of the original greys having become green by the varnishes over them having turned yellow.

COLOUR OF EYES.

There are no such things in nature as blue or black eyes ; the terms are merely relative. The blue, may be made by cobalt modified by "shadow colour;" the black, by an admixture of burnt terra sienna with "shadow colour;" or, if very black, by the addition of a little lake, and sepia, the pupil of the eye being marked in with sepia. Some "blue" eyes are of a purpleish hue ; in which case, add a little pink madder to your cobalt.

CHEEKS AND LIPS.

The nearest approach to the colour of the cheeks and the lips will be found in a mixture of pink madder and vermilion, either colour predominating according to the subject. It must be kept in mind, that children have more vermilion, adults more pink madder, and old people more of a purple tone ; this last being made by adding a little cobalt to the former mixture. Some painters use carmine ; but of itself it is far too bright, besides being very fugitive ; hence pink madder is in all respects better. The upper lip being almost always in shadow is both darker, and less bright in colour, than the lower lip ; but as these reds will lose somewhat by time, they may be painted a little brighter in colour than they are in nature, to allow for this loss. The chin is also redder than the surrounding colour. The shadows of the jaw from the mouth downwards—(being the

third of the gradations of tone first spoken of)—partake of the “pearly tint,” with a slight admixture of grey as it approaches the chin.

THE NECK AND BOSOM.

Though the neck is invariably of a greyer tone than the face, yet great care must be used not to give it a lead colour.

The clavicles, or collar bones, are sometimes slightly red; and the shadows of the bosom are usually of a bluish tint.

HANDS AND ARMS.

The elbows are slightly pink, (pink madder), and the tints of the hands also, in healthy girls; and though the lower arm is often of a purple hue, yet use this with cautious discretion.

If the flesh colour of your sitter be very yellow, put near it a yellow ribband, or, at least, a more powerful yellow, to overpower by contrast this undesirable peculiarity; and so, with a very red or purple face, a red, or purple curtain, or any other suitable adjunct may be admissible with the same object.

HAIR.

The shades of hair are so various, that you must endeavour to match its tints from nature, always keeping in mind, that the lights on hair differ from the local colour; the lights on brown hair, for instance, being of a purple hue. There is nothing worse than to make the shadows of hair of the same colour as the hair, but merely darker than the local tint. I give a few general mixtures to be used with due allowance as approximations.

Flaxen Hair.—This is produced by Roman ochre, modified with sepia. The shadows of this hair are often of a greenish hue, which sepia will give. These two colours—(the sepia predominating)—will also make “piggy hair.”

Auburn Hair.—Lights made in neutral tint, with a little lake; local colour, burnt umber; deepest shadows, perhaps a little lake in addition.

Chesnut Hair.—The lights are somewhat purple; the local tint is burnt umber, and lake modified by sepia; the deepest shadows often partake of rather a purple hue.

Mouse-Coloured Hair.—This kind of hair occurs very often; neutral tint and burnt umber make a very lovely mixture; the shadows, sepia.

Bright Red Hair.—Be careful never to exaggerate this kind of hair. Venetian red, and lake modified by sepia, if required, will form it; burnt terra sienna is sometimes used. If more yellow be wanted, add a little Roman

ochre. Red hair may be neutralized by placing white ribbons or bands near it, which will make it darker; while blue ribbons have the effect of making the red tones much more conspicuous.

Dark Brown Hair.—Lights, purple; local colour, sepia, with perhaps a touch of lake.

Raven-Black Hair.—Lights, neutral tint, and a little indigo; local tint, indigo lake and gamboge, mixed together to form a black, or a rather purple, brown or blue tone, according as one or other of these colours may predominate.

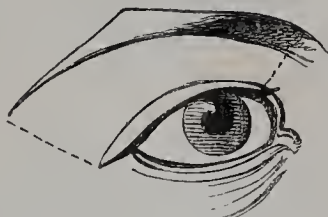
Grey Hair.—Cobalt and sepia will produce an iron-grey, to which may be added a little neutral tint, or a little burnt umber, to modify it either way to the peculiar tint you require.

A white cap on the grey hair of a lady will render the grey less conspicuous. Black near it, as a black cap, or neck ornaments, will make it more apparent than may be desirable.

The light and shadow of hair generally must be painted in masses; and in finishing, never attempt to make out single hairs, unless it be to divide the masses or to break the contour of the face; but even for this purpose, small tints, or locks rather than single hairs, should be used. In this a reference to good pictures or to good engravings will be the best guide.

EYEBROWS.

These differ according to the hair of the head, but are often darker. It may be well to observe, that eyebrows are never “arched” in nature, so that to paint them so is a very great mistake. The eyebrow invariably partakes (more or less) of the following form :

FIGURE VIII.

and must be drawn with this feeling :—the nearest point to the eye will be where it approaches the nose ; the widest part is above the outer corner of the eye.

FIGURE IX.

TOUCHES.

“Touches” are the darkest parts of the various features, and where the expression is concentrated, as the pupil of the eye, the eyelash, the darkest part of the eyebrow, the nostrils, the corners of the mouth. They give the true expression of the features ; they are, however, always put in last, and are mixed with gum-arabic, to give force and transparency. Sepia may be used for those about the eye ; but the nostrils are put in with pink madder and sepia : this is true also of the mouth. The mouth is the most changeable of all the features, and the touches upon it will determine the general expression.

The light in the pupil of the eye, and on the nose, is always to be put in with constant white. “White lead” must never be used, as it will turn brown or black ; indeed it ought never to be made as a water colour, so thoroughly has it been superseded by other superior chemical foundations.



GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE FACE.

Next to expression and good colour is roundness. This is effected partly by graduating your shadows gently into your lights, and partly by “reflections ;” that is, where the greatest depth of shadow is between the light and the extreme edge of the round object to be represented. These “reflections” may generally have a little yellow (Roman ochre) worked into them ; with careful judgment, however, for yellow is a very powerful colour, and may easily be

over-used. The chief reflections in a face are at the jaw and in the shadowed side of the neck. The principle of reflections will be found developed in the figures here shewn.

FIGURE X.

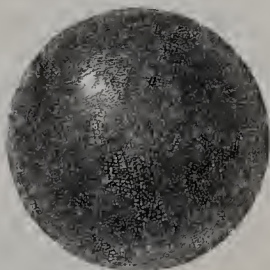
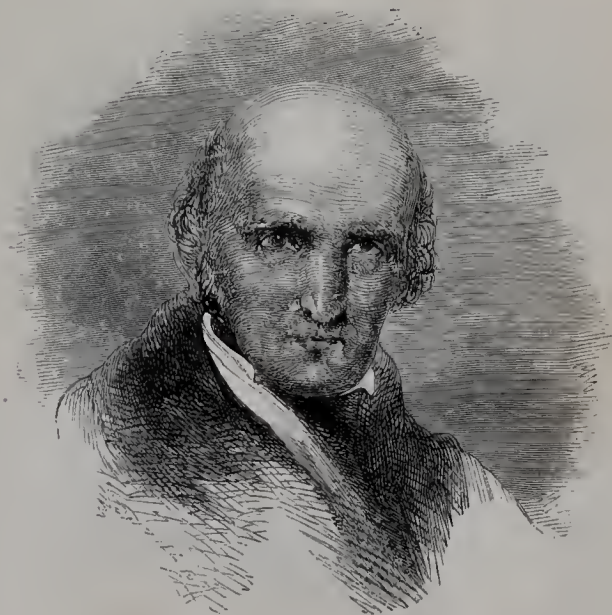


FIGURE XI.



Do not make the shadows of your face too dark, especially under the nose, as they will look muddy. It is said that Queen Elizabeth would never permit any shadows to be put in the face of her portrait. Sir T. Laurence painted many pictures nearly on this principle; that is to say, all broad shadows were avoided, and the rest made so delicate as scarcely to appear.* (See Fig. XII.)

FIGURE XII.



* It is observable that, in the celebrated "Chapeau de paille," of Rubens, there appears to be no shadow in the face. The fact is, the face is almost all shadow, the *real* light on it being very small indeed, while the shadows and demi-tints are so transparent as not to be easily detected. This sort of picture is technically called a "demi-tint" head, relieved by dark touches.

Be careful that the space on the upper lip, between the nose and the mouth, be not left too light, or the effect will be a disagreeable pout. It is generally of a slightly greyish tint.

The ear should always be well covered down, that it may be secondary to the more important lights. It is generally of a pink tint, (pink madder and shadow colour). A large or prominent human ear is, in nature, ever an ugly, unsightly object, being, in fact, an organ without being a feature.

When the head is turned to a three-quarter view, avoid, if possible, making the eyes look at you, lest it give a sinister and disagreeable leer.

FIGURE XIII.



If you wish to see the effect of light and shade, or of colour, turn the face upside down, when you will see both without being misled by the identity of the features.

It is a common fault to paint a front view of the mouth to a three-quarter face. The mouth should of course be foreshortened as well as the other features.

Never leave lights running up into eorners, but cover the corners down.

Having washed in, as far as you possibly can, the colour, light, shadow and expression of your head, the figure and dress must next be carefully adapted to it, and then painted. Be careful to get something, if possible, white, near the face, such as a shirt-collar or a frill; this, besides generally being your brightest light, will give tone to the face, for white is the test of a good flesh colour.* You may now wash in all your drapery, but without using any gum in your colour; and having effected this, put in your background, so adapting it in tone and colour as to give to the face its greatest possible value; this done, (as far as "washing in" can possibly do it), you may begin to stipple, but not before. This mode of "finishing" will be treated of hereafter, as some observations must previously be made.

* This is the reason why, generally speaking, the old Italian masters (Titian excepted), never used it at all, or, at least, so subdued it that it should not injure their flesh colour. The Flemish painters alone, from their superiority in colouring, could permit white to be near their flesh colour.

Until the dress with its colours be arranged and sketched in, you cannot tell what your background should be, as that is consequent upon the face and draperies, and, in fact, as we shall hereafter see, makes the picture.*

It must be evident to all that the head is the principal object of interest, and everything else must be done with an eye to set that off to the greatest advantage. As soon as the head is painted in, it will be well to gum the ivory to the paper beneath, avoiding contact with the gum where the head is, as the gum would appear through the ivory with a bluish tone, and so spoil the flesh tint. When this is dry, gum the second leaf of paper, and so on to the third; this will be enough to insure opacity, and the others may be left loose.

DRESS AND DRAPERY.

Most things that are gaudy, are vulgar; and much, that does not seem so very vulgar in nature, will appear so in a picture; for this reason, if even an intensely blue dress be worn in a room, the colours of the furniture, the gilding, and the adjacent accessories, even to the dress of others,

* Sometimes, in order to save time, painters take a sitting or two for the face, and then proceed to put the background or drapery in, to its full force; but this is a bad plan, generally resulting in the face being feeble compared with the accessories.

help to destroy its obtrusive predominance; but as all pictures are necessarily limited in size, and miniatures particularly so, such neutralizing adjuncts cannot be introduced without crowding the picture. Therefore blue, excepting to a very small extent, should be avoided, as it is a colour extremely difficult to be harmonized with others on so small a scale. Indeed, all positive colours are liable to the same objection, except black, which, however, is a negative colour; and in choosing the colour of the dress of your sitter, some reference should be made to the complexion: thus, morone and amber, with a yellowish green background, harmonize well with a glowing dark complexion, but would annihilate a very fair light-haired girl, to whom a white or a pale blue dress would be more suited. In fact, the object of a choice of proper colour in dress is to assist, and not to destroy, the complexion.

As it is not our object, in this work, to treat (excepting incidentally) of composition and design, and as it would be quite impossible to give the mode of mixing every possible tint that may come before you, I can only give you a few mixtures for the compound colours that most commonly occur.

Blues.—Blue is (excepting as an accessory) a disagreeable colour; the brighter blues are ultramarine, French blue, and cobalt, but the last works the best, and is generally bright enough for most things; smalt is gritty in washing. If you must use blue drapery, “kill” it as much as possible by making your shadows brownish, or as warm as possible; or, as blue is a very powerful colour, make the

mass of drapery, gown, or coat, “negative,” *i. e.*, only of a blueish colour; when a few touches of bright blue will produce all the effect of blue without destroying the adjacent colours.

Dark Blue.—Indigo and Prussian blue; indigo is to be preferred as being less positive.

Reds.—Scarlet vermillion, by itself a heavy colour, is much increased in brightness by laying under it a strong tint of Indian yellow; another more transparent scarlet may be made with Indian yellow and carmine; the shadows of scarlet may be of lake and sepia.

Crimson is usually carmine, as it is a very powerful colour; the shadows, carmine and sepia.

Lake is also a crimson, but inferior in brilliancy to carmine; sepia and lake, however, make an excellent colour for “touches” in various parts of your picture, and will, with the addition of a little cobalt, form a fine morone.

A “scriptural red,” *i. e.*, of the tone and colour of the robe of the Saviour, is made by venetian red and lake, modified as you like by sepia; shadows, sepia and lake.

Pink is merely carmine thinly laid, the shadows, which are inclining to lilac, may be made with a little cobalt and sepia, mixed with the local colour.

Yellows.—The principal of these are Indian yellow, gamboge, Roman ochre, and chrome, or cadmium yellow; with these you may form any tint of yellow that you may require. Indian yellow is a warm yellow, the shadows of which may be slightly purple; gamboge is a pale, sickly yellow, the

shadows of which are of a greenish hue (sepia will make them); and cadmium is a rich orange yellow, quite permanent, the shadows of which may be made of cadmium itself, sepia and lake; Roman ochre, is a brownish yellow, semi-opaque, and used in solemn scriptural pictures.

COMPOUND TINTS.

Purples.—Crimsons and blues mixed together make purples; carmine, or lake and indigo, or carmine and French blue, will form a dark purple; carmine and cobalt, a lilac purple; these purples may be subdued with sepia to whatever tone you like.

Greens.—Indian yellow, with Indigo, or Prussian blue, will form dark green, (the Prussian blue the brightest). Gamboge and cobalt form a pea or cold light green; gamboge and Prussian blue form a sea or emerald green; Roman ochre, Indigo, and sepia will form a drab or dull green.

The shadows of green are often of a reddish colour; (Venetian red, or lake mixed with sepia). Green is a very powerful colour, and a disagreeable one if used in large masses. It requires to be killed with warm colour.

Orange.—Cadmium mixed with carmine and lake will form an orange; its shadows, carmine or lake, qualified with sepia.

Browns.—Sepia and burnt umber are the principal browns used in miniature painting.

Sepia, lake, and a little indigo will form a rich brown.

Burnt umber, or Venetian red modified with lamp or ivory black, will form a useful snuff-coloured brown, principally used in painting coats.

Whites.—The very best white that you can use for draperies, &c., is that introduced by Winsor and Newton, and called by them “Chinese white.” It is an oxide of zinc, and therefore cannot change. It is of a good body, and works well; it is however not very bright, so that for the highest lights of all the old constant or “permanent white,” must be used.

Blacks.—Indigo, lake, and gamboge form a transparent black; lamp or ivory black, an opaque black, to be used for black velvets or coats, the lights of which are made by mixing Chinese white with it.

The shadows of lace may be put in with a greyish tint; some choice lace is in nature very yellow, the shadows partaking more or less of that tint; do not paint them so, however, when near flesh, as they will make your lace look merely dirty.

Gold.—For the local colour of gold epaulettes, &c., Roman ochre will be found bright enough, as gold is a very quiet, unobtrusive colour; the shadows may be of burnt umber, and if there be a red coat, a little vermilion will creep into the reflections. The lights of gold, which are very subdued in colour, may be put in with chrome yellow mixed with Chinese

white, deadened with burnt umber or burnt terra-sienna.

In the manifold draperies used in water colours, some are transparent and some opaque, according to the texture of the material. Opaque colours are better when used in powder than in cake, as having more body; they must be mixed with a palette-knife on a ground-glass slab. When mixed to the tint you require, they must be laid on thickly with a brush, and any inequalities scraped down: when they are dry, a wash of thin gum-arabic is to be passed carefully over them, as evenly as may be, but not, if it be possible, so as to be obliged to go over the same place twice. When it is quite dry, any inequalities must, as stated above, be taken off with a scraper, and gum again passed over; and this process is to be repeated until the surface is smooth and shining. Then paint your lights and shadows on the surface with a portion of gum, and you will thus get solidity or texture combined with transparency and force.



BACKGROUNDS.

When the head and drapery are put in, it is the background which forms the picture, and its use is not merely to throw out the principal object, but by its tone and colour to control and harmonise the whole.

Although, in miniature painting, gum should not be used in the face and drapery, until the background is put in and the finishing is commenced, yet it is better to use a little gum in the colour which you use for the background. Wash it in, however, as evenly as you can, and do not attempt to stipple it in from the first. When dark enough in tone, and of the proper colour, leave it, and commence to finish first the face and then the drapery; and when that is all done, then commence to stipple your background, but not before, because your background is intended merely to assist the more interesting parts.

Do not in any picture begin and finish any particular part at once, (unless it be the head, in a case of limitation as to the time of sitting); but keep the picture together; that is, get every part of it in before you begin to "finish;" this is a golden rule.

As miniatures are necessarily on a very small scale, do not crowd your background with a number of unmeaning objects; but begin by painting them simply, as mere modes of giving effect to your principal object.

Sometimes, when you are compelled by circumstances to paint a person in a gaudy dress, as an Indian prince or princess, or in a costume, you may require some object or accessory by which to repeat the colour; in that case, a vase of flowers, or a macaw, or a glowing sky, such as a sunset, will give you an opportunity for the repetition of whatever colours you may consider desirable. You must however look at blues, reds, and yellows as general colours, and not as individual tints of any one colour. You need

not therefore repeat scarlet with scarlet, but by some other red; since scarlet and crimson are equally reds, gamboge and orange are both yellows, as indigo and cobalt are equally blues, although of different tints. Indeed, avoid, as far as possible, repeating the same colours with the same tints of that colour.

If you must have a curtain, use an opaque colour for it, whilst the skies or other parts should be of transparent colour; it then gives a difference of texture.

When the flesh colour of your sitter is a very bad one, you will find that a background of dull green (yellow ochre, sepia, and a little indigo) will give it its full value; that is, it will, by contrast, show the reds to the best advantage. This "green" may vary according to the colour of the dress and the other objects, from a yellow green to a drab. I would not, however, recommend a cold, blue green; and the shadows of this green background may be of a rather purple or lake-coloured hue, produced by sepia, lake, and perhaps a little indigo.

The following remarks will elucidate our views as to the effect of contrast in colour. If a lady in a very white dress have a very dark background, the white dress will become intensely conspicuous, and will be in every way offensive to the eye. The same principle must be applied to a dark dress, which for similar reasons must not have a very light background, or it will become too heavy: this is that balance of power which is called "tone."

With a very fair lady of a very delicate complexion, the dress ought to be white, or at least of some very delicate

colour ; and the light background may be sky, that the blue in it may, by its gentle contrast, give value to, and not overpower, the flesh. A swarthy man or woman should have a dark dress and a dark background. Reds are best for dark people ; blues for fair ones : put pink roses near a dark skin, and you will destroy it ; but put dark blue, or even green, and you will give it value. Such is the way in which all these matters should be looked at.

As regards what may be called the antagonism of colours, it is a good plan to keep the warmest ones near the centre of your picture, and the blues and colder colours outside ; while the best relief of any single object is admitted to be that where the background is rather darker than the lights, and lighter than the shadows. These principles, however, are best seen by the study, not the copying, of engravings from pictures by great masters.

By "tone" in painting, harmony is to be understood—harmony as well in colour as in light and shade, the absence of violent contrast in both. Difficult as this may be to beginners, it is a principle that must never be lost sight of, and, by degrees, the eye will become educated to perceive it, to require it, and to be offended by its absence.

Having thus, by washing, got in your design, your colour, your light and shadow to their full force as nearly as you can, you may now begin to finish the head, improving its colour and its light and shade, and giving also the expression as nearly as you can. Study the picture well ; do nothing at random ; go over it again and again, until you feel certain that you can, at that time at least, do

no more satisfactorily, and then put it by for a week, when your fresh eye will probably detect several points that may be improved, but which your jaded vision before overlooked.



STIPPLING.

The surface of ivory is so hard that the tints are not absorbed as on paper; consequently, the difficulty of washing one tint over another is greater, and the interstices or inequalities of the tints, not being so even as on paper, require filling up to make them so. This is the sole object of that dotting, technically termed “stippling,” which so many mistake for the end instead of the means.* Stippling, I repeat, is the means, not the end, and, as a means, it is inseparable from miniature painting; but it must be used as an assistance to, not a substitute for, the real object; namely, expression, colour, and roundness. I will now describe the principle of stippling.

Every wash of colour is more or less uneven; that is, some parts are darker than others, some spots lighter.

* Some tyros begin by “stippling in” their colour—an interminable labour, resulting in a feeble, sickly picture; and not knowing why, they believe that the end, erroneously called “finishing,” is attained. The truth is, that a roughly-worked miniature may be very highly-finished, as far as expression, colour, and roundness—the *real* points of a picture, are concerned.

This is particularly the case when, to get in the depth of colour, the washes are necessarily small, or when, as on ivory, it is difficult to wash one tint over another.

“Stippling” is, then, the filling up with colour these little inequalities, and taking out, with a brush or scraper, those dark spots of colour which, if also filled up, might make your tint too dark. These minute touches of colour must not be put on in dots of all the same shape, as that would be mere unmeaning “dotting;” but you must endeavour to fill up as nearly as you can each interstice in the form in which it happens to be left.

Unless that you have some particular object in view, your touches ought not to be so dark as to appear. There is a manner of stippling which will make your tint either darker or lighter; for, curious as it may seem, the general effect of stippling is to make your face or background seem lighter than before, although in reality more colour has been added to it. If you wish your tints to be lighter, begin by removing all the darker spots, and then delicately fill up the interstices so as not to add colour to the general tint; if you wish your tints to be darker, fill up between the dark spots until they disappear. This is, in fact, the whole art of stippling. Scrapers made for the purpose may be used, or sometimes the point of a needle; and occasionally the wetted point of a fine sable brush is advantageous. As a general principle, the scraper should be used as sparingly as possible, else your miniature will have a disagreeable, scratchy character; and if it be used much in forming the texture of hair, it will produce an undesirable

grey colour. Leave all the lights that you can; do not make them by scraping out.

BRISTOL BOARD.

Having now gone through all the processes of miniature painting on ivory, I will next point out the trifling differences and advantages of paper or Bristol board in the art.

Paper admits of larger and bolder drawings being made on it than ivory; it washes more easily, and, generally speaking, is not so highly worked. It may either be left sketchy, as a vignette, which could not well be done on ivory, or it may be filled up as a picture. On paper, however, the lights must be left, as the scraper cannot be used, for by it the surface of the material would be destroyed. There is a mode, however, of partially supplying this latter defect, and, when your colour has roughened the paper, of smoothing it and producing almost the surface of ivory; so that you can stipple it quite as readily, and nearly as finely, if you choose. It also allows you, if it be necessary, to wash out an error, the power of perfectly repairing the injured surface. This process is that of the "plate and roller." The plate is made of steel, about $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches square. The roller is something like a common table castor, furnished with a handle.

One mode of using the plate and roller is to place the face, or any other part you may require to be affected by the process, downwards on the plate, and to rub, or rather

press, the back of it with the roller until the requisite smoothness is attained; but the plan which I adopt is somewhat different: having placed the part to be smoothed (generally the face, and sometimes the arms) carefully upon the plate, the back of the drawing downwards, I then put a piece of glazed writing-paper over the surface, and use the roller over that; by this means, it is more quickly done, and with less labour, and, as I think, with less danger of the work being injured. Whichever plan you adopt, carefully place the part you wish smoothed as nearly in the centre of the steel plate as you can, lest your roller should go over the edge of the plate; for, in this case, a most undesirable indentation would be made on your paper or Bristol board. Apply the roller quite evenly, not all in one direction, but when you have rolled from one end or side of the face to the other, roll a second and a third time in a diagonal direction, so that if any ridges should have been made in any one direction, the repetition of the process may restore the smoothness.

You may occasionally lift up the writing-paper to ascertain what degree of smoothness the surface is receiving, and to see that you are not exceeding the limits of the flesh colour; as, except in case of accident, it is not necessary to smooth or polish any other part of the drawing than the flesh.

The colours used on paper are precisely the same as on ivory; but in painting white drapery it is desirable to use white in the lights, as it gives texture.

Do not use Indian rubber to obliterate any pencil marks on paper, else it will become greasy from the operation,

besides receiving an abrasion of the surface. When such obliteration is necessary, use the crumb of new, not of stale, bread.

CONCLUSION.

A few words will suffice to recal to the recollection of the reader the most important of the principles which I have endeavoured to lay down.

Let it be ever borne in mind that painting is not, as many people imagine, a mere imitative art, but that it is one strictly reflective, requiring much skill in the disposition and arrangement of its subject-matter; for the design, drawing, and colour, with the light and shadow, have to be attended to, not *singly* only, but *as a whole*.

In following the axioms laid down in the preceding pages, view them merely with reference to the beautiful; and do not destroy the individuality of the portrait by straining after peculiar characteristics in order to make them agree with the standard of antiquity.

Nothing, of course, can more tend to give a true taste and to strengthen the judgment, than a close and unremitting study of the works of the great masters; but, undoubtedly, much mischief often results to beginners from their copying even celebrated pictures before they have knowledge or judgment enough to discover and modify the defects of the originals, and to take advantage of their excellencies. The want of this knowledge often causes in copying an exaggeration of all that is bad, while

the true beauties and excellencies are overlooked. I may, as an illustration of my meaning, recommend the beginner to select, as studies for colour, the works of Titian, Rubens, Vandyke, and occasionally of Murillo; but let him avoid, as studies in colour, the olive-tinted pictures of the Italian school, and the sombre darkness of Spagnoletto—at least, until he has made considerable progress, and has well stored his mind with a just and correct power of appreciating the excellencies of the different great masters. And, whenever he may determine to copy any picture, let him decide also what his object may be in the undertaking; whether, that is to say, it be for its drawing, its colouring, its expression, or its general subject; then let him follow it up with reference to this peculiar design.

The mind, so trained in the best school of art, will avoid all undue gaudiness and glitter, and all meretricious ornamentation, as it will, on the other hand, dread to sink into the dark and gloom of extreme soberness in colour. There will ever be a constant anxiety to guard against violent oppositions of light and shadow, as well as strong contrasts of colour; and it will be ever carefully remembered, that the greatest beauty of art is “harmony,”—that quiet, unobtrusive harmony, which is called “tone.”

